

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO  
WESTERN DIVISION AT DAYTON**

**Valerie S Blankenship, Administrator of the  
Estate of Diana L. Hatt, Deceased,**

**Plaintiff,**

**v.**

**Case No. 3:19-cv-38  
Judge Thomas M. Rose**

**Dollar Tree Stores, Inc.,**

**Defendant.**

---

**ENTRY AND ORDER STRIKING STIPULATED  
PROTECTIVE ORDER. (ECF 21).**

---

Pending before the Court is the parties' Stipulated Protective Order. ECF 21. Therein the parties seek permission to file under seal documents that they believe are confidential. Because the Court cannot abdicate its control of its own docket to the parties, including control of what is filed under seal and what is not, the Court **ORDERS** the Clerk to **STRIKE** the parties' Stipulated Protective Order. ECF 21.

"The public has a strong interest in obtaining the information contained in the court record." *Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp. v. F.T.C.*, 710 F.2d 1165, 1180 (6th Cir. 1983). A district court that chooses to seal court records must set forth specific findings and conclusions which justify nondisclosure to the public. *Shane Grp., Inc. v. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan*, No. 15-1544, 2016 WL 3163073, at \*4 (6th Cir. June 7, 2016) (citing *Brown & Williamson*, 710 F.2d at 1176. That is true even if neither party objects to the motion to seal. *Id.* A court's obligation to

explain the basis for sealing court records is independent of whether anyone objects to it. *Id.* A court's failure to set forth those reasons...is itself grounds to vacate an order to seal. *Id.* See also *Procter & Gamble Co. v. Bankers Trust Co.*, 78 F.3d 219, 227 (6th Cir. 1996) (opinion of Merritt, J.) and 229 n.1 (Brown, J., dissenting). The parties' protective order, ECF 21, ¶ 14, does not meet this requirement.

**DONE** and **ORDERED** in Dayton, Ohio, this Thursday, September 12, 2019.

s/Thomas M. Rose

---

THOMAS M. ROSE  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

